

situation, the South Carolinians would not attack the forts. But they ran the risk of being mistaken and it is certain that if South Carolina had seized Fort Sumter when it was unoccupied, Anderson could not have remained in Fort Moultrie many days. The harbor would have been in the undisputed control of the State long before Mr. Buchanan's term of office expired. It is also not unlikely that this result might have been effected without a collision, as Anderson's situation at Fort Moultrie would have been so extremely precarious that the Government might very possibly have felt compelled to withdraw him. On the other hand, if the Government had acceded to Anderson's request and had adequately manned the forts, it was certainly quite possible that Anderson would have proved to be right, and that South Carolina would not have hazarded a resort to arms, the issue of which would have been so very doubtful.

3. It is certainly an interesting fact that Anderson's transfer of his command to Fort Sumter should have been made under a misconception of the situation. He was trying his best strictly to obey his orders. He thought he had found that tangible evidence of a design to proceed to a hostile act, which in Major Buell's language justified

him in
occupying Sumter. But there can be no
doubt that
he was mistaken. The authorities of
South Carolina
had sent their ambassador^s to
Washington to treat
for the forts, and although they were
determined to
secure the forts ultimately, they had no
intention of
attacking them while the negotiations
were going on.
Anderson, we repeat, was mistaken. But
it was a